



Trustee application

Skills, experience and supporting statements

Applications in alphabetical order (by surname)

1. MARGARET COLLIER (NORTH WEST)

NOMINATING SOCIETY: MANCHESTER CIVIC SOCIETY

WHICH AREA OF CIVIC VOICE'S WORK INTERESTS YOU?

Developing stronger links between Civic Voice and Regional Networks (I am a committee member for the North West Association of Civic Societies)

Developing and supporting more high-profile campaigns to ensure we continue to make the case for the importance of conservation areas

Developing and supporting campaigns against the continued reduction in local government staff, which is now compromising their ability to protect of heritage assets

Building membership and the APPG for Civic Societies

RELEVANT SKILLS & EXPERIENCE

I want to use my experience in running local campaigns to support Civic Voice in making the case for increased investment at national level in the historic environment.

Years of experience in civic societies and residents' groups include participation in the formal Local Development Framework meetings, regular attendance at planning committee meetings and successfully challenging an Appeal to the Planning Inspectorate against enforcement. From a high-profile case in Bolton, I also understand the need for well-resourced local authority staff, particularly conservation officers.

I understand policy and strategic work at a local authority level as I sit on the Manchester Conservation and Advisory Panel Group, and am actively involved in SAVE Britain's Heritage and their campaigning.

This experience, and my network of contacts, have helped with a high-profile case in Manchester in which we are crowdfunding a challenge, by judicial review, of a highly controversial planning permission which undermines the protections which the NPPF and conservation area status should provide.

I am a committee member of Manchester Civic Society, NWACTS and Twentieth Century Society (NW) and an active member of SAVE Britain's Heritage. I was a member of the Civic Voice Leadership Programme and attended HS2 and APPG debates

PERSONAL STATEMENT

The civic movement is a rich resource of experience, knowledge and enthusiasm, which needs to flow productively between national, regional and local interests in both directions to enhance all, with as few barriers as possible. Without finance, the opportunities will not be fully exploited; they may in places be snuffed out.

In these times of austerity, this need for underpinning finance has to substantially be met from a vibrant membership base –outside funding which may evaporate almost overnight may be a necessary evil, but cannot be a core plank of our survival.

Therefore, I am so enthused by Civic Voice's focus on Conservation Areas. It can appeal to many of those living in Conservation Areas. Their interest can go beyond sympathy to conservation principles to the hard-vested interest, which is often a catalyst for getting things done.

I already work through Manchester Civic Society and North West Association of Civic Societies to develop a sense of ownership in the historic environment. I appreciate the need for a weighty impact at national level to resist negative pressures and encourage increased investment in our national heritage, so I hope to make a contribution at national level through Civic Voice.

2. SI CUNNINGHAM (YORKSHIRE)

NOMINATING SOCIETY: BRADFORD CIVIC SOCIETY

WHICH AREA OF CIVIC VOICE'S WORK INTERESTS YOU?

As a journalist, I would be keen to support Civic Voice's communication strategy in support of its strategic plan, policy development and conservation area campaign.

RELEVANT SKILLS & EXPERIENCE

Si Cunningham is a Bradford-based journalist and creative copywriter, specialising in feature writing and branded content. In recent years, Si has worked for the Mirror newspaper group, The Guardian, Metro and NME.

Elected in 2016 as the youngest chair of a Civic Society in England. I believe it is important that societies come together to increase their influence and it is why we have been engaging with YHACS and Civic Voice.

We were proud to receive a Special Award and invitation to the Civic Voice Design Awards for Sunbridge Wells, Bradford. We were delighted to host a study visit in March 2018. We were furthermore pleased when the Bradford Telegraph ran a front-page article highlighting Conservation Areas at Risk in May 2018 as part of Civic Voice's Big Conservation Conversation.

We need to make ourselves heard publicly in the 21st century, by promoting and publicising the positive social difference the civic movement makes by using all of the modern social media, our influence will be enhanced and there will be better outcomes.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

I first got involved with the civic movement back in 2014 when I read an appeal in our local newspaper for younger members to come forward.

In my first speech to our members, I used social media to illustrate how Bradfordians view their own city. I would like to share the benefits of social media with other civic societies.

But let's acknowledge our challenges too. There are too many empty shops on our high street and too many unanswered questions about what will happen to our city centres as a result of dwindling footfall and significant retail shift. We cannot force the hand of the local council decision makers one way or the other, but we can become a more effective voice for the people of the places where we live.

I want to speak out against the mediocrity and bad design that has plagued our towns and cities in recent years. I believe there is a strong case for civic societies to take ownership of this important issue by launching Design Awards and would want to help support the Civic Voice team in making this happen. Let's recognise and reward those who are making a positive contribution to England's environment, while offering guidance and advice to those who are falling short.

3. PHIL DOUCE, (WEST MIDLANDS)

NOMINATING SOCIETY: WORCESTER CIVIC SOCIETY

WHICH AREA OF CIVIC VOICE'S WORK INTERESTS YOU?

Working to increase the membership of Civic Voice.

Working to rebalance the activities of Civic Voice and cater for the needs of the smaller societies.

To get Civic Voice back into a better financial situation

RELEVANT SKILLS & EXPERIENCE

My background is in project management and I worked most of my life working as a senior project director for a number of major software houses in charge of project groups implementing manufacturing systems into large organisations.

For a number of years I volunteered at a local National Trust property and played a significant part in establishing the history of the house, writing room guides, and being a member of the Oral History Group where I worked on the photographic archives. I acted as a guide and gave talks to many organisations on the history of the property.

Since joining the Worcester Civic Society I designed and set up the web site for the society and in my 4 years as Vice Chairman restructured the society into three working panels. I set up the Society's Blue Plaque scheme which to date has erected some 6 Blue plaques in the city with several more in the planning stage. Last year I implemented a new project to replace all the 8 city Gate plaques of which 6 have been erected. In the last three years I led the team working with the Worcester City Council to survey and record all the Grade 2 listed buildings in Worcester using a team of some 40 volunteers. This is an exercise we have just completed a second time reviewing our previous results.

We are just about to embark on the Civic Voice's project on War Memorials and we are in the process of recruiting the volunteers to carry out this work.

We have many new projects in the planning stage waiting for people to own.

I also belong to a panel in Worcester who is setting up a monthly newspaper supplement to cover the heritage and culture in Worcester.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

As stated above in areas of interest.

4. MARGARET HOLLINS, (SOUTH EAST)

NOMINATING SOCIETY: Epsom Civic Society

WHICH AREA OF CIVIC VOICE'S WORK INTERESTS YOU?

Planning policy and law, strategic planning for towns (as opposed to cities), community engagement and participation in planning and place-making. The role of the arts in civic society. My interests reflect my background and experience both professionally and as a volunteer, please see details of relevant skills and experience below.

RELEVANT SKILLS & EXPERIENCE

I qualified as a solicitor in 1978, and from 1979 – 1992 taught law at NE Surrey College of Technology. In 1988 I was awarded a year's paid study leave by Surrey County Council to complete a Master's degree in law (LLM), where I specialised in planning and environmental law. In 1992 I joined London South Bank University (LSBU) as a senior lecturer in planning and environmental law, working with planning and other built environment professionals on a range of courses at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, and undertaking research and consultancy, and delivering programmes of continuing professional development for the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) and the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). I was appointed Principal Lecturer and Deputy Head of Department in 2006, taking on a range of management responsibilities and quality assurance roles, including chairing the Faculty Academic Standards Committee. In 2012 I became a member of the LSBU/RTPI Partnership Board, taking of the role of lead academic in 2016. I was appointed Associate Professor in 2015 and retired in August 2018. I joined Epsom Civic Society in 2011 and have been its Chair since 2016. This has enabled me to develop and strengthen a community perspective for planning.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

Many of our medium-sized towns are at a tipping point: they face a need to respond to current challenges in terms of new housing and infrastructure provision fit for the 21st century, while at the same time retaining their local distinctiveness and heritage. Civic societies can and should play a vital role both in shaping the future and safeguarding the past. They should seek to inspire progressive improvement in the quality of urban life for everyone, but may lack the resources and expertise to do so. Civic Voice can be a channel and network to enable societies to share experience and expertise and work together on common projects. Informed community engagement with the planning system is vital, as is the need to develop a vision for civil society, as the current Civil Society Futures project seeks to do. Promotion of good design and valuing local knowledge to create better places where people want to live and work are two key elements. Early engagement with developers is vital. A major challenge is how to engage all sectors of the community, so that Civic Voice becomes a truly diverse and representative organisation.

5. HELEN KIDMAN, (YORKSHIRE)

NOMINATING SOCIETY: ILKLEY CIVIC SOCIETY

WHICH AREA OF CIVIC VOICE'S WORK INTERESTS YOU?

Civic Voice support for civic societies and identifying and encouraging the talented and expert people in civic societies to undertake activities for Civic Voice. The Regional Forum can be helpful in this.

RELEVANT SKILLS & EXPERIENCE

I chair Ilkley Civic Society, am vice-chair of the Friends of Ilkley Moor and secretary of Yorkshire and Humber Association of Civic Societies. Currently, I'm involved with our neighbourhood plan, conservation area reviews and re-opening our museum as an art and heritage hub, including the creation of a local archive.

For Civic Voice, I chair the Regional Forum which is a key link between societies, regional associations and Civic Voice. I contributed to the Civic Voice report; *What is the future for our conservation areas?* Inputted to the website (<https://www.bigconservationconversation.com/>) and supported the development of the Civic Conservation Audit, all launched in May 2018 at an APPG for Civic Societies meeting.

Originally from Lincolnshire, I went to university in London and lived in St Albans before relocating to Yorkshire in 1992 when my job moved to Leeds. Consequently, I've had experience of living in different communities - small village, multi-cultural London, cathedral city and Dales town, each with different issues and solutions. I have been a member of several civic societies - each one unique.

I was a senior procurement specialist in central government before I retired, including experience of managing contracts teams, formulating procurement policy and managing professional development.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

Priorities

Civic Voice needs to increase its membership to ensure it speaks as the authoritative voice of the civic movement.

CV needs to be responsive to societies that are experiencing difficulties and be able to offer timely specific support when needed, recognising that every group is very different in structure and operation. We can use technology and modern methods to develop the capacity of groups.

Focus

Links to central government through the APPG for Civic Societies, Historic England and other national groups are critical, as societies away from London find those difficult. We should strengthen regional relationships with these bodies.

CV needs to highlight the impact of government cuts on local authority conservation, planning and housing departments and ensure that MPs, via the APPG, are aware of the consequences at a local level. The Big Conservation Conversation has been a start. But we must continue to build on this. Selecting the right campaigns, speaking out and being relevant will help bring in new members to civic societies across England.

I aim to keep the civic society movement connected, influential, relevant and united, ready to deal effectively with controversial issues impacting the local historic environment across England.

6. ROBERT OSBORNE, SOUTH EAST

NOMINATING SOCIETY: ST ALBANS CIVIC SOCIETY

WHICH AREA OF CIVIC VOICE'S WORK INTERESTS YOU?

1. Developing a structure to share information between Civic Societies, through regional forums and larger/smaller Societies interest groups
 - at present there isn't a clear route for good practice sharing or simply exchanging ideas and seeing what others have achieved. St Albans CS is willing to host a larger societies meeting and would value knowing how others address issues such as inconsistent decisions on planning, and building an active membership
2. Promoting the Design Awards to a wider audience
 - after attending this year's awards, I am keen to see how we can better publicise the results and the messages it conveys to governmental, planning and design bodies.
3. Reviewing services and support to members
 - Using my experience as an employee of various membership bodies, I see opportunities to look at how Civic Voice interacts with its members and involves them in its activities. At present it can sometimes look remote and unaware of the issues that affect local Societies, so I am keen to see how we change this perception.

RELEVANT SKILLS & EXPERIENCE

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I work in membership organisations, mostly trade associations, where I see the same issues of how do we get information to the right people, what do we offer to different types of member, how do we focus on the issues that members believe are most important, and do we provide the right mechanisms for people to be involved. I want to bring this experience to the wider civic movement and offer support and guidance to the Civic Voice team.

Some specific highlights from my career include:

- 30 years working for membership organisations in administrative and management roles
- 7 years' experience as membership services director of medium size trade association
- Organiser of conferences, awards presentations, meeting and seminars
- Maintenance of website content and appointing developers for new sites
- Created membership databases and overseen renewal processes

PERSONAL STATEMENT

Improving how Civic Voice engages with its members especially those whose link is through their Civic Society is of particular interest to me. Sharing of good practice, highlighting initiatives undertaken by other societies and providing a range of ways to access and collate such information is an area where I would like to contribute. Much of this exists already but it appears uncoordinated and sometimes inconsistent in its dissemination.

Coming from a Society that has not previously taken an active interest in Civic Voice, I believe that I can help articulate views of those who have seen CV as distant and lacking focus. Combining that with my knowledge of operations and communications within membership bodies, I look forward to helping CV enhance its contact with and support for its members.

In the last 18 months, St Albans CS has engaged with Civic Voice through inviting speakers including Terry Farrell, being represented at the Design Awards and seeking to be involved in the Big Conservation Conversation. I would like to take that further by taking an active part in the Board and helping Civic Voice improve its links with its member societies.